ENGAGE PEO

Client Alert
Maryland Worker Freedom Act

WHAT'S NEW: Maryland recently passed the Maryland Worker Freedom Act which limits actions an employer can take when an employee or applicant refuses to attend a required meeting where the employer communicates its opinion on religious or political matters. The new law is effective **October 1, 2026**.

WHAT IT MEANS: Under the new law an employer may not discharge, discipline, refuse to hire or otherwise penalize an employee or applicant because the employee or applicant declines to attend, participate in, or listen to communications from the employer during a mandatory employer sponsored meeting in which the employer communicates its opinion on religious or political matters.

The new law does not prohibit an employer:

- From communicating information that an employer is required to communicate under the law.
- From conducting a meeting that involves religious or political matters as long as attendance is voluntary.
- From communicating information that is necessary for employees to perform their job duties.
- From meeting with or participating in communications that are part of coursework, symposium or an academic program- when the employer is an institution of higher education.
- From communicating to employees information related to a policy of the employer or a law that the employer is responsible for administering- when the employer is a governmental unit.

Some employers are not subject to the new law including but not limited to religious organizations and political organizations when the purpose is to communicate the employer's political tenets or purposes.

Employers are required to display a poster in a conspicuous location as well as provide a notice to new employees upon hire. The Commissioner of Labor and Industry will develop a poster and model notice by November 1, 2026.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO: Employers should review their processes and policies surrounding mandatory meetings and ensure that content of meetings stays within the confines of the law. Employers must ensure that managers are aware of the new prohibitions. Employers should continue to check here for the applicable poster and model notice.

If you have any questions, please contact your HR Business Partner/Consultant.